

Translated for the Lady's Book.

VANINA VANINI:

OR, PARTICULARS OF THE LAST VENUE OF THE CARBONARI,

DISCOVERED IN THE PAPAL STATES.

It was a spring evening of 18th. All Rome was in motion. The celebrated banker, the Duke de B***, was giving a ball in his new palace in the *Place de Venice*; to embellish which all that the arts of Italy and the luxury of Paris and England could produce of the most magnificent description had been collected. The concourse was immense. The fair and reserved beauties of England, who had solicited the honour of assisting at the ball, arrived in crowds, and the handsomest women of Rome contended with them for the palm of beauty. A young girl, whose brilliant eyes and ebony hair proclaimed her Roman, entered conducted by her father, all her movements marked by something peculiarly imposing. The strangers as they were ushered in, struck with the lavish splendor of the scene that they beheld, exclaimed in admiration: "The fetes of none of the kings of Europe equal this!"

Kings have not Roman palaces; and, besides, they are obliged to invite *les grandes dames* of their court; the Duke de B*** asked only pretty women. This night he had been particularly happy in the selection of his guests. The men seemed enchanted. Among so many distinguished beauties it was not easy to decide which was the most handsome; and it was some time before the election was made; but at length the princess Vanina Vanini, the same whose eye of fire, lofty demeanor, and raven locks, had arrested general attention on her entrance, was proclaimed the queen of the ball; and, immediately, the young Romans and the strangers deserted all the other saloons and crowded into that which held the beauty of the night.

After having gratified the wish of her father, the Prince Don Asdrubale, by dancing with two or three German potentates, she accepted the invitations of several fine-looking English noblemen; but their stiff and formal manners soon tired her. She seemed to take more pleasure in tormenting the young Livio Savelli, who, passionately enamoured of her, was fluttering about her person intent on making himself agreeable to the haughty beauty. He was the most elegant youth in Rome, and moreover a Prince; but if a novel at any time was given him to read, he would throw it aside when he had glanced over twenty pages, saying, it made his head ache; which was a disadvantage in Vanina's eyes.

Towards midnight a rumour circulated through the assembly that caused considerable excitement. A young Carbonaro imprisoned in the Fortress Saint Ange, had that night escaped, by means of a disguise; and, through an excess of romantic audacity, had attacked the last corps of guards he had to pass with a stiletto; but he himself had been wounded in the fray, and the sbirri were then pursuing him through the streets,

guided by the tract made by his dropping blood, and hoped soon to recover the fugitive. As this anecdote became the subject of conversation, Don Livio Savelli, dazzled by the grace which Vanini had displayed, with whom he had been dancing, said, as he conducted her to her seat, "But pray now, tell me seriously, where is the happy mortal to be found who could please you?"

"The young Carbonaro, who has just escaped from prison," replied Vanina, "for he has shown that he was not born for nothing."

The Prince Don Asdrubale approached his daughter. He was a rich man, who had not for twenty years examined the accounts of his steward, who loaned to his master his own revenues at a great interest. If you had met him in the street, you would have taken him for an old player—you would not have remarked that his hands were loaded with five or six enormous rings, adorned with very large diamonds. He had had two sons who became Jesuits, and afterwards died foolish. He had forgotten them; but he was provoked that his only daughter was not more disposed to wedlock. She was already nineteen years of age, and had rejected several brilliant proposals of marriage. What was her reason? The same that Sylla had for abdicating—*contempt for the Romans*.

The next day after the ball, Vanina observed with surprise, her father, the most negligent of men, and who never in all his life had given himself the trouble even to turn a key, locking with great care the door of a narrow stair-way that led to an apartment, which was situated in the third story of the palace, and the windows of which opened on a terrace filled with orange trees. Vanina went to pay several visits; on her return, the principal entrance to the palace being obstructed by the preparations for an illumination, the carriage entered by a back way; and as she accidentally raised her eyes, saw with astonishment that one of the windows of the apartment that her father had closed with so much precaution was open. "It must then be tenanted, but by whom?" thought she. The next day she obtained the key of the little door that opened on the orangery, and cautiously approached the window which was still open; the blinds, with which it was provided, serving to conceal her. At the farther end of the chamber there was a bed, on which was stretched a human figure. She was about to retire, when she perceived a female dress thrown across a chair; and in regarding more attentively the person who was in the bed, saw that she was fair, and apparently very young. She no longer doubted that the unknown was one of her own sex. The dress on the chair was bloody, and there was al-

so blood on a pair of woman's shoes that were placed upon a table. The object of her scrutiny made a movement, and Vanina observed that she was wounded. A large linen cloth saturated with blood was bound to her breast by ribbons, which it was evident the skillful hands of a surgeon had not applied. Vanina remarked that every day, her father, about four o'clock, shut himself up in his apartment, and afterwards went to visit the unknown, then soon descended, got into his carriage, and drove to the Countess de Vitteleschi's. When he had gone, Vanina hastened to the little terrace whence she could observe the unknown, in whose favour her sensibility was so lively excited, and for the mystery of whose situation she was so anxious to divine some probable cause. The dress on the chair appeared to have been pierced with poignards—she could count the rents the murderous weapons had made. One day she saw the subject of her curiosity more distinctly: her fine blue eyes were turned towards heaven, and she seemed in prayer. Soon her eyes filled with tears; and the young princess, touched with her distress, had much difficulty to prevent herself from speaking. The next day Vanina dared to conceal herself on the little terrace, before the coming of her father. She saw him enter, carrying a small basket of provisions; he seemed uneasy, and said but little; and spoke in so low a tone that, though the window was open, she could not understand him. He soon withdrew. "This poor female," said Vanina to herself, "must have some very terrible enemies, for my father, who is one of the most careless and indolent beings on the face of the earth, to be afraid of trusting any one with her situation, and to give himself the trouble of ascending a hundred and twenty steps every day."

One evening, as Vanina cautiously stole to the window of the unknown, their eyes met, and all was discovered. She threw herself on her knees, exclaiming: "I love you, I am devoted to you!" The unknown beckoned her to enter.

"What apologies do I not owe you," said Vanina, "and how offensive my foolish curiosity must appear to you! I swear to you to be secret, and, if you require it, never again to offend you with my presence."

"Offend me!" cried the unknown, "who is there that could not find happiness in it? Do you live in this palace?"

"Certainly; but I see you do not know me: I am Vanina, daughter of Don Asdrubale."

The unknown gazed upon her some moments in silent astonishment, blushed deeply, then said: "Deign to allow me to cherish the hope that you will come and see me daily; but I desire that the Prince may not know of your visits."

The heart of Vanina throbbed violently. The manners of the unknown appeared to be those of a person of distinction. "This poor female," thought she, "no doubt has offended some great individual; perhaps, in a moment of jealousy, killed her lover." She could not ascribe her misfortune to an unromantic or common cause. The unknown told her, she had received a wound

in her shoulder that had penetrated the breast, and caused her great pain—often her mouth filled with blood.

"And you have no surgeon?"

"In Rome, you know, surgeons are obliged to furnish the police with an exact statement of all the sick persons under their care. The worthy Prince dresses my wounds himself."

The unknown avoided with peculiar grace all reference to the cause of her misfortunes. Vanina already felt warmly attached to her. One thing, however, surprised exceedingly the young Princess, and that was the great difficulty, on one occasion, her new friend had to suppress a sudden inclination to laugh in the midst of a conversation, in her opinion, certainly, very serious.

"I should like very much to know your name," said Vanina to the unknown.

"Clementine."

"Well, adieu now, dear Clementine—to-morrow at five o'clock I will see you again." The next day she found her very ill.

"I must send a surgeon to you," said Vanina embracing her.

"I would much rather die, than that my benefactors should suffer in the least for having afforded me protection," replied the unknown.

"The surgeon of His Excellency Savelli Cantanzara, the governor of Rome, is son of one of our domestics," rejoined quickly Vanina. "He is devoted to us, and from his situation fears nobody. My father does him injustice in mistrusting his fidelity. I will send him to you."

"No, no," cried the unknown, with a vivacity that surprised her fair visitor; "do you vouchsafe to come and see me, and if it is the will of God to call me to himself, I shall die happy in your arms." The next day she was worse than she had been.

"If you love me," said Vanina, as she was leaving her, "you will allow a surgeon to attend you."

"If he comes my happiness vanishes."

"Foolish girl that you are, I will not listen to you, but will order his attendance immediately—Nay, I insist upon it."

The unknown made no reply, but, to detain her, seized the hand of Vanina, which she covered with kisses, while her eyes filled with tears. At length releasing her hand, the unknown said to her, with the expression of countenance of a felon going to execution: "A moment—for a moment remain. I have a disclosure to make you. I deceived you when I told you my name was Clementine. I am an unfortunate Carbonaro."

Vanina, nearly overcome by the first rush of newly awakened sensations, staggered a few paces, and would have fallen to the ground, if she had not clung to the back of a chair for support; but soon recovering her self-possession, she listened apparently unmoved to the young man.

"I feel," continued he, "that by this avowal I lose the only thing that attaches me to life; but

I am incapable of deception. My name is Pietro Missirilli. I am nineteen years of age. My father is a poor surgeon of Saint Angelo-in-Vado, and I a Carbonaro. Our *vente* was surprised; and I being seized, was loaded with chains, dragged from Romagna to Rome and cast into a dungeon, lighted night and day by a single lamp, where I passed thirteen months, and where, doubtless, I should have lingered out a painful existence, but for a charitable friend who, inspired with the idea of effecting my deliverance from the gloomy cell, contrived to furnish me with a woman's garb for the purpose. Disguised as a female, in the night I left my prison, and was passing before the guards of the outer gate, when I heard one of them cursing the Carbonari, and I struck him; not, I assure you, from a foolish daring on my part, but from the impulse of momentary resentment produced by the caittiff's insulting speech. Pursued after this imprudent act, through the streets of Rome, wounded by several bayonet-thrusts, my strength forsaking me every moment, I rushed into a mansion the door of which was open. Hearing the soldiers following me, I sprang into a garden, and fell within a few steps of a lady who was promenading there."

"The Countess de Vitteleschi, the friend of my father!" exclaimed Vanina.

"What, has she told you the circumstance? It matters not. Whoever she was, the generous lady, whose name ought never to be pronounced in company with mine, saved my life. As the soldiers rushed in to seize me, your father, who happened to be there, made me seek refuge in his carriage. I feel very ill: for several days the bayonet thrust that I received in my shoulder has prevented me from breathing freely. I shall die, and in despair, since I shall see you no more."

Vanina, who had betrayed considerable impatience during the recital, hastily withdrew as soon as he had finished. Missirilli could discover no pity in her eyes as she retired; but rather the expression of wounded pride of a haughty spirit.

At night a surgeon came, but alone. Missirilli was in despair. He feared he should never again behold Vanina. He put several questions to the surgeon, who bled him without returning any answer. The same silence the following days. Pietro's eyes were never off the window of the little terrace by which Vanina was accustomed to enter. He was very miserable. Once towards midnight he believed he saw the shadow of some one on the terrace. Was it Vanina?

Nightly Vanina stole to the window of Missirilli's apartment and watched him through the blinds. "If I speak to him," said she to herself, "I am lost—No, never again ought I see him—I must not—I will not." This resolution taken, she recalled, in spite of herself, the affection she had conceived for the young Carbonaro when she was so foolish as to believe him to be a female. After so intimate a connection must she then forget him altogether? In her more rea-

sonable moments Vanina was startled at the change which had taken place in her ideas since Missirilli's disclosure. All those things of which she had been in the habit of thinking, were, as covered with a veil, or appeared only in the distance. A week had not passed without Vanina appearing to the young Carbonaro, when, pale and trembling, she entered Missirilli's room with the surgeon, saying: "She had come to tell him, he must prevail upon her father to substitute one of his domestics in his place." She did not remain ten seconds. Some days after she again appeared, as if actuated by humanity. One night, though Missirilli was so much better that there was no longer any cause of alarm for his life, she ventured to come and see him unattended. Missirilli was overjoyed at the sight of her, but he took care to conceal his love; above all, he would not compromise the dignity of man. Vanina, who had entered the chamber crimsoned with blushes, anticipating protestations of extreme love from the young Carbonaro, was disconcerted and offended with the expressions of devoted friendship, but a little more tender, with which he received her, and soon withdrew without his attempting to detain her.

Several days after she again visited him alone, and met with the same assurances of profound respect and eternal gratitude. So far from striving to check the transports of the grateful youth, she asked herself, if she, of the two, alone loved. This young girl, until then so proud, bitterly felt the extent of her folly. She affected gaiety and even coldness and reserve; her visits to Pietro were less frequent; but she could not prevail on herself to discontinue them altogether. Missirilli, on the other hand, burning with love, but recollecting his obscure parentage and what he owed to himself, had inwardly promised only to descend to speak of his passion, if Vanina remained eight days without seeing him. Fierce was the struggle in the breast of the Princess between love and pride; but, at length, the softer sentiment prevailed: "Well," said she at last, "if I visit him 'tis for my own gratification; never will I avow the interest with which he has inspired me." She made long and frequent visits to Missirilli, who always spoke to her as he would have done if twenty persons had been present. One night, after having passed the day in promising herself to think only of the Carbonaro with abhorrence and to be more distant and reserved than ever, she told him that she *loved* him.

If her folly was great, it must be owned that she was perfectly happy. Missirilli thought no more of what he had believed due to the dignity of man, but loved as one loves for the first time at nineteen in Italy. Four months quickly passed. One day the surgeon told Pietro he no longer needed his attendance. "What ought I to do?" thought Missirilli; "remain concealed with the first beauty of Rome? No, then the vile tyrants who confined me for thirteen months in a dungeon without ever allowing me to behold the light of day, will believe they have discouraged

me—crushed my spirit. Italy thou art truly unfortunate if thy children abandon thee for so little!"

Vanina no longer doubted that Pietro would desire no greater felicity than never to be separated from her, his happiness appeared so great; but a reply of General Bonaparte still echoed bitterly in the ear of the youth and influenced all his conduct in regard to females. In 1796, as General Bonaparte was quitting Brescia, the public functionaries who attended him to the gate of the city, told him, that the Brescians loved liberty more than all other Italians. "Yes," said he, "they love to talk of it to their mistresses."

"When night comes," said Missirilli to Vanina, in a very constrained manner, "I must leave you."

"Be careful to return to the palace before day-break: I will be waiting for you."

"At day-break I shall be several miles from Rome."

"Very well," said Vanina, coldly; "but whither are you going?"

"To Romagna, to avenge myself."

"As I am rich," returned Vanina, with the most composed air, "I hope you will accept from me some arms and money." Missirilli contemplated her for some moments, and then threw himself into her arms, exclaiming, "Soul of my life! you make me forget every thing, even my duty; but the more noble thy heart, the better ought you to be able to comprehend mine." Vanina wept much; and it was settled that he should not leave Rome until the day after the morrow.

"Pietro," said she to him, next day, "you have often said to me, that a person well-known, a Prince for instance, who had considerable money at his disposal, would have it in his power to be of great service to the cause of liberty, if ever Austria should be engaged at a distance from us, in some great war."

"Decidedly," answered Pietro, astonished.

"Well, you have the requisite courage and firmness of heart, and only want the necessary rank and importance among men: I offer you my hand, and an income of two hundred thousand livres, and will take upon myself to obtain the consent of my father."

Missirilli threw himself at her feet. Vanina was radiant with joy.

"I love you with intensity, but I am a poor servant of my country, and the greater the misery of Italy the more faithful should I be to her. To obtain the consent of Don Asdrubale, I should have to play a sorrowful part for many years—Vanina I refuse you." But no sooner had he pronounced this word, than his resolution began to waver, and he hastily added, as if in extenuation of his conduct: "It is my misfortune, I love you more than life, and that to abandon Rome is the greatest punishment that could be imposed on me. Ah! why is not Italy delivered from her oppressors! With what transport could I seek with you a home in America!"

Vanina was astonished. The refusal of her hand piqued her pride; but soon she threw herself into his arms. "Never," said she, "hast thou appeared so noble. I am thine forever. Thou hast as great a soul as any of our ancient Romans possessed." Every thing connected with the future, all the suggestions of good sense disappeared. It was an instant of perfect love. When reason resumed her usurped empire, Vanina said, "I shall be in Romagna nearly as soon as yourself. I will have the baths of the *Poretta* prescribed to me, and will stop at a castle we have at San-Nicolo, near Forli."

"There I will consecrate my life to you," cried Missirilli.

"Hereafter it shall be my lot to dare all," said Vanina, with a sigh; "I shall ruin myself for you; but no matter. Could you love a dishonoured woman?"

"Are you not my well-beloved wife? I shall love and protect you."

When Vanina had retired, Missirilli began to conceive his conduct to be cruel. "What then is this country?" said he to himself. "Is it not a being to whom we owe gratitude for a benefit, and who would be unhappy and might upbraid us should we neglect it. 'Country and liberty!' 'tis like my cloak, a necessary thing to me, and which I must purchase, it is true, unless I have inherited it from my father; but, at last, I love my country and liberty, because the two things are useful to me. If I do not need them, if they are like a cloak in the dog-days, why purchase them, and at an extravagant price? Vanina is so lovely! she is so singular a creature! They will strive to please her; and she will forget me. These Roman Princes, whom I despise so much, have so many advantages over me! Ah, if I go she will forget me, and I shall lose her forever!"

At midnight Vanina came to see him; and he told her of the incertitude in which he was plunged; and the discussion into which, because he loved her, he had entered upon that great word *country*. Vanina was happy; and said to herself: "If it is absolutely necessary to choose between his country and me, I should have the preference."

The clock of the adjacent church struck three. The moment of departure was arrived. Pietro tore himself from her arms. He had descended the little stair-way, when Vanina checking her tears, said to him, smiling: "If you had been nursed by a poor countrywoman, would you have done nothing to express your gratitude—would you not have endeavoured to compensate her? The future is uncertain, you are young amongst your enemies; give me three days for the sake of gratitude, as if I were a poor woman, and to pay me for my attention." Missirilli remained. Finally he left Rome, and rejoined his relatives, whose joy was great, as they had supposed him dead; and his friends wished to celebrate his return by killing a Carabiniere, or two, (the name given to the *gen d'armes* in the Pope's dominions.) "Let us not kill unnecessarily an Italian who understands the use of arms," said

Missirilli; "our country is not an island like happy England: we only want soldiers to resist the intervention of the kings of Europe." Some time after, Pietro closely pressed by the carabinieri, killed two of them with the pistols given to him by Vanina, and a price was set upon his head.

Vanina did not appear in Romagna. Missirilli thought he was forgotten; his vanity was wounded; he began to think much more of the difference that separated him from his mistress; and, in a moment of tenderness and regret at past happiness, he conceived the idea of returning to Rome to learn in what she was engaged. This foolish thought had nearly prevailed over what he believed his duty, when one night the bell of the mountain church sounded the *Angelus* in a very singular manner, and, as if the ringer was labouring under an absence of mind. It was the signal for the meeting of the *vente* of the carbonari, to which he had united himself on arriving at Romagna. The same night, all of them were assembled at a certain hermitage in the woods; the two hermits to whom it belonged, stupified by opium, little suspected the purposes for which their habitation served. Missirilli, who entered very dejectedly, learned that the chief of the *vente* had been arrested, and that he, a stripling, scarcely twenty, was about to be elected chief of the *vente*, which recorded among its members men upwards of fifty years of age, and who had been engaged in the plots and conspiracies ever since the expedition of Murat, in 1815. On receiving this unexpected honor, Pietro felt his heart beat with exultation and pride; and he resolved, now that he was alone, to think no more of the young Roman who had forgotten him, and to consecrate all his thoughts to the attempt to deliver Italy from her oppressors.

Two days after, Missirilli saw, in the report of the arrivals and departures which was addressed to him as chief of the *vente*, that the Princess Vanina had arrived at her castle of San-Nicolo. The reading of this name threw more trouble than pleasure into his soul. It was in vain that he believed, he would assure himself of his fidelity to his country by not hastening that same night to the castle of San-Nicolo; for, the thought of Vanina, whom he was neglecting, prevented him from giving the necessary attention to the affairs of his station. The next day he visited her. She loved him as she had loved him at Rome. Her father, who wished her to marry, had detained her. She brought him 2000 sequins. This unexpected succour served to impart additional consequence and influence to Missirilli in his new dignity. Poignards were manufactured at Corfu; the confidential secretary of the legate, empowered to pursue the carbonari, was bought; and a list of the *curfs*, who acted as spies to the government, was procured by its means.

It was at this period that the organization of one of the least foolish conspiracies that were ever attempted in wretched Italy, was com-

pleted. I will not here enter into misplaced details; let it suffice to say, that if success had crowned the enterprize, Missirilli would have acquired a large portion of the glory. According to his directions several thousand insurgents were to rise at a preconcerted signal, and armed to wait the arrival of the superior chiefs. The decisive moment approached, when, as generally happens in such affairs, the conspiracy was paralyzed by the arrest of the principal leaders.

Vanina had not been long in Romagna, when she perceived that love of country had made her lover forget every other passion; and that a blow was given to their affection, from which it would never recover. She strove in vain to reason with herself; a profound melancholy possessed her; and she detected herself in cursing liberty. One day, when she was at Forlì on a visit to Missirilli, she was not mistress of her grief, which, until then, her pride had subdued; and said to him in the bitterness of her disappointment: "You love me as a husband only; why this coldness to me?" Soon she burst into a passionate flood of tears, from shame in being reduced so low as to use reproaches. Missirilli spoke to her, but it was rather in communing with himself than in answer to her. The thought of abandoning him, and returning to Rome, suddenly entered her mind; and she felt a cruel joy in punishing herself for the weakness she had betrayed. After a few moments' silence, her resolution was taken—she was unworthy of him if she did not leave him—she enjoyed the painful surprise he would feel when he in vain sought to find her; but soon the thought of never having been able to obtain the love of the man for whom she had committed so many follies, deeply affected her. Then she broke silence, and strove to wring from him one word of love. He uttered some fond expressions with an abstracted air; but it was in far different tones that, in speaking of his political enterprises, he cried: "Ah! if this design does not succeed, if government should again discover it, I abandon my country!" Vanina sat unmoved. She had felt for more than an hour that she beheld her lover for the last time. His exclamation threw a fatal light into her soul. She said to herself: "The carbonari have received several thousand sequins from me, and cannot doubt of my devotion to their cause."

She only emerged from her reverie to say to him: "Will you come and pass a day with me at the castle of San-Nicolo? Your presence at the meeting to-night is not necessary. To-morrow at San-Nicolo we can walk together, which will calm the agitation of your mind and restore to you that composure and self-command of which you have so much need, in the great designs in which you are concerned." Pietro consented.

Vanina left him to make the necessary preparations for their journey; locking, according to her custom, the door of the little chamber where she had concealed him. She then ran to the dwelling of a woman who had been one of her *femmes de chambre*, and who had quitted her ser-

vice to be married, and to open a small store in Forlì. There she wrote in haste upon the margin of a prayer-book, she found in the apartment, an exact description of the place where the *vente* of the carbonari was to be held that night, finishing her denunciation in these words: "This *vente* is composed of nineteen members whose names and abode you have herewith." Having written this list very exact in every particular, except that the name of Missirilli was omitted, she said to the woman, on whose fidelity she could depend: "Carry this book to the cardinal legate: let him read what I have written and return the volume to you. Here are ten sequins. If the legate pronounces your name your death is certain; but you will save my life if you get him to read what I have written."

All went admirably. The fear of the legate prevented him from conducting himself *en grand seigneur*. He permitted the common woman, who demanded to be admitted to his presence in a mask, to appear before him, on condition that her hands were tied. In this state the shop-keeper was introduced to the august personage, whom she found entrenched behind an immense table covered with a green cloth.

The legate read the page of the prayer-book, holding it at a considerable distance from his illustrious nose, through fear of a subtle poison, and then returned to the woman, whom he ordered not to be followed. Less than half an hour after leaving her lover, Vanina, who had seen her messenger return, appeared before Missirilli, believing that hereafter he would be entirely her's. She told him, "there was an extraordinary sensation in the city, and she had been informed that carabinieri were patrolling streets in which they had never before appeared. If you would have me place any confidence in the report," added she, "we will set out immediately for San-Nicolo." Missirilli agreed to follow her, and they walked to the carriage of the young princess which, with a discreet and well-paid confidential servant, attended her within a mile and a half of the city.

Arrived at the castle of San-Nicolo, Vanina, agitated by the bold and treacherous act she had committed, redoubled her tenderness for her lover; but in speaking of love to him, it seemed to her that she was only playing a part; she had not considered that she might experience the tortures of remorse; and while pressing Missirilli in her arms, she inwardly said: "There is a certain word that may be told, and that word once uttered, that instant and forever he will look upon me in horror." In the middle of the night, one of her domestics suddenly entered her apartment. He was a carbonaro, without her being aware of it. There were secrets then, even of this nature, that Pietro concealed from her! She shuddered. The intruder had come to inform Missirilli that at Forlì the habitations of nineteen carbonari had been surrounded, who immediately on their return from the *vente* had been arrested. Though so suddenly surprised, nine had escaped. The carabinieri had taken them to the

prison of the citadel, in entering which one of the prisoners had thrown himself into a deep well, and was killed. Vanina lost the command of her countenance; happily Pietro did not observe it, or he would have read her crime in her eyes. "At this moment," added the domestic, "the garrison of Forlì occupies all the streets. Every soldier is near enough to his comrade to interchange words with him, and the inhabitants cannot cross the street without encountering a guard."

After the man retired, Pietro was pensive but for a moment: "There is nothing can be done for the present," said he. Vanina was in agony. She quailed before the looks of her lover. "What ails you?" he asked; then thinking of something else than her situation, ceased to regard her. Towards the middle of the day, she ventured to say to him: "Well, here is another *vente* discovered; I trust that you will be tranquil for some time." "Very tranquil," he replied, with a smile that withered the nerves of her soul.

She went to pay a visit to the pastor of the village, who, she thought, was perhaps a spy of the Jesuits. At seven o'clock, when she returned to dinner, she found the little chamber deserted where her lover had been concealed. Half distracted she searched the house for him; but he was not to be found. In returning to the little room, in a state of mind not to be described, she discovered the following note:—"Despairing of our cause, I am going to surrender myself prisoner to the legate. Fate is against us. Who has betrayed us? Perhaps the wretch who threw himself into the well. Since my life is useless to unhappy Italy, I would not that my companions, seeing that I alone have not been arrested, should suspect that I have betrayed them. Farewell; if you love me, think to avenge me. Destroy, annihilate the miscreant who has denounced us, were he my own father!"

She fell upon a chair in a paroxysm of grief. She could not utter a syllable, and her eyes were dry and burning.

Finally, she threw herself upon her knees: "Great God!" cried she, "receive my vow! Yes, I will punish the wretch who has betrayed him; but first I must restore liberty to Pietro."

An hour after, she was on her way to Rome. For a long time her father had urged her to return. During her absence he had arranged her marriage with the Prince Livio Savelli. Scarcely had she arrived before he, trembling, spoke to her concerning it. To his great astonishment she consented at the first mention of the subject; and the same night, at the Countess of Vitteleschi's, the overjoyed parent presented her almost formally to Don Livio; and she conversed long and freely with him. He was a most elegant young man, and had the finest head of hair in the world; and, though he possessed considerable spirit, his character was so volatile and unstable, that he was not at all suspected by the government. Vanina thought that by flattering his vanity she would be able to make him a convenient agent for her purposes. As he was nephew to Monsignor Sa-

velli Catarzara, governor of Rome and minister of police, she supposed the spies would not dare to scrutinize his actions.

After having treated Don Livio for several days in the most agreeable manner possible, Vanina told him he would never do for her husband; for, in her opinion, his head was too light. "If you were not a child," said she to him, "your uncle's deputies would not have any secrets unknown to you. For instance, now, what is to be the fate of the carbonari lately arrested at Forlì?"

Two days subsequent to this, Savelli came to her, and said, that all the carbonari had escaped. Vanina fixed her large black eyes upon him with a bitter smile of ineffable contempt, and disdained speaking to him during that evening. After a lapse of a day he appeared before her, and, blushing, acknowledged that he had at first deceived her; "But," said he, "I procured a key of my uncle's cabinet, and have seen by the documents I found in it, that a congregation (or commission) composed of the most influential and distinguished prelates and cardinals, is now assembled in the greatest secrecy, debating whether the carbonari shall be tried at Ravenna or Rome. The nine carbonari taken at Forlì, and their chief Missirilli, who was such a fool as to surrender himself, are now confined in the castle of San Leo." At the word *fool*, Vanina grasped the prince with all her strength.

"I wish," said she to him, "to go with you into your uncle's cabinet, and inspect with my own eyes those official documents; you must have read badly."

Don Livio's blood absolutely curdled at a request which it was almost impossible to grant; but the extravagant humour of this young girl redoubled his love. A few days after, Vanina, disguised as a man, in a very pretty little dress of the livery of the house of Savelli, passed a half an hour in the midst of the most secret papers of the minister of police. She enjoyed a moment of unalloyed transport when she discovered among them the daily minutes of the trial of the *attainted Pietro Missirilli*; her hands trembled while she held this paper, and, in reading the name, she was nearly overcome with conflicting sensations. Retiring from the palace of the Governor of Rome, Vanina permitted Don Livio to embrace her, saying to him: "You have well stood the test to which I subjected you."

After such encouragement, the young Prince would have set fire to the Vatican to please Vanina. That night there was a ball at the French Ambassador's; and she danced much, and almost the whole while with Don Livio. He was intoxicated with delight. It was her policy not to allow him time for reflection.

"My father is sometimes very strange and whimsical," said Vanina to him one day, "he turned out of the house two of his servants this morning, who have been here complaining to me. One of them has asked a place with your uncle, the governor of Rome, the other, who was a soldier of artillery under the French, wishes to

be employed at the castle of Saint Ange." "I will take both of them into my service," quickly replied the young Prince. "Is that what I asked of you," haughtily demanded Vanina. "I repeat to you word for word the prayer of the poor fellows; they must have what they ask, and nothing else."

Nothing more difficult. Monsignor Catarzara was not a thoughtless, rash personage, and he only admitted men into his mansion that were well known to him.

In the midst of a life to all appearance filled with pleasures, Vanina was a prey to remorse, and a fixed dejection clung to her heart. The slowness of events was killing her. Her father's steward had provided considerable money for her. Ought she to forsake the paternal roof and go to Romagna, and endeavour to procure her lover's escape? Absurd as was this idea, she was on the point of putting it into execution, when fate took pity on her. Don Livio said to her: "The ten carbonari of the *vente* Missirilli are to be transferred to Rome; but, after receiving their sentence, to be executed in Romagna. This is what my uncle obtained from the Pope to-night. You and I are the only persons who know this secret. Now are you satisfied?" "You are becoming a man," returned Vanina, "make me a present of your portrait."

The prisoners on the way from Romagna to Rome were to stop at the Citta-Castellano, whither Vanina found a pretext to go; and the next morning she saw Missirilli as he was led out of prison. He was chained alone on a cart, and looked very pale, but dignified and resigned. An old woman threw him a nosegay of violets; Missirilli smiled in thanking her for the fragrant gift.

Having seen her lover, all her thoughts seemed freshened, and her courage renewed. Some time prior to these circumstances she had obtained for M. the Abbe Cari, the situation of almoner of the castle of Saint Ange, where her lover was to be confined, and had also appointed him her confessor. It is no small matter in Rome to be confessor of a princess, niece of the governor.

The trial of the carbonari was not long. The ultra party, to avenge themselves for their arrival in Rome, which could not be prevented, formed the commission which was to try them of the most ambitious prelates; at the head of which presided the minister of Police.

The law against the carbonari is clear; and though those of Forlì could not preserve any hope, they defended their lives by every possible subterfuge. The judges not only condemned them to death, but some of them voted for its being inflicted in the most cruel and tormenting manner that ingenuity could devise. The minister of police, whose fortune was made, (for the office he held was only relinquished to take the cardinal's hat) was not persuaded of the necessity of resorting to such barbarity, and carried the sentence of all the condemned to the Pope, and had it commuted to several years of imprisonment. Pietro Missirilli alone was ex-

cepted. The minister saw in this young man a dangerous fanatic; and, besides, he had been condemned to death as guilty of the murder of the two carabinieri, of which we have spoken. Vanina knew the sentence and commutation a few minutes after the minister returned from the Pope's.

Monsignor Catanzara entering his palace at midnight, found his valet de chambre was not in waiting; the astonished minister rang several times, but an old imbecile domestic alone obeyed the summons. Provoked and impatient he locked his door, and, the weather being very warm, he took off his coat, and flung it in a bundle towards a chair; which, as he threw it too violently, it passed over, and striking a muslin window-curtain, discovered to him the form of a person concealed behind its folds. He sprung to his bed, and seized a pistol; and, as he turned to the window, a very young man arrayed in his livery approached him, holding a pistol in his hand. At sight of his menacing appearance the minister cocked his weapon, and, taking aim, was going to fire, when the intruder exclaimed, laughing,

"What! my lord, do you not recognize Vanina Vanini?"

"What is the meaning of this mischievous frolic?" replied the minister, in anger.

"Let us reason calmly. In the first place your pistol is not loaded."

The minister, astonished, assured himself of the fact, and then drew a small dagger from his bosom.

"Let us be seated, my lord," said Vanina to him, with a little air of authority that was charming, and seated herself composedly upon a sofa.

"Are you, at least, alone?" asked the minister.

"Absolutely alone, I swear to you."

He, however, took care to ascertain the truth of her assertion, and then seated himself in a chair within three paces of his unwelcome guest. "What interest," said Vanina to him, with a sweet and composed air, "would I have to attempt the life of so good and temperate a man as you, who probably would be replaced by some feeble-minded, hot-headed creature only capable of destroying himself and others."

"What is it then you want?" said the minister, peevishly. "This scene does not suit me, and ought not to be prolonged."

"What I have to communicate," replied Vanina, haughtily, all at once divesting herself of her courteous carriage, "concerns you more than me. It is desirable that the carbonaro Missirilli may be saved. If he is executed, you will not survive him a week. I have no interest in all this; the frolic which so much displeases you, was, at first, commenced to gratify myself, and afterwards to serve one of my friends. I wish," continued she, resuming her easy, familiar air, "to render a service to the man of spirit, who will soon be my uncle; and who, to all appearance, should bear much longer the fortune and dignity of his house."

The anger of the minister vanished; the beau-

ty of Vanina, no doubt, contributed to the sudden change. Monsignor Catanzara's fancy for pretty women was well known in Rome, and in her disguise of a *valet-de-pied*, of the house of Savelli, with her neatly-fitting silk stockings, her red vest, and her little sky-blue jacket trimmed with silver, and a pistol in her delicate hand, Vanina, looked ravishingly beautiful.

"My future niece," said the minister, almost laughing, "you have been guilty of a very bold and indiscreet act, and it will not be the last."

"I trust," said Vanina, "that so wise a personage as you are, will perceive the propriety of keeping it secret; above all, from Don Livio! and to engage you to it, my dear uncle, if you will grant me the life of the protégé of my friend, I will give you a kiss." In conversing thus, in that half-jocular manner with which the Roman ladies know how so well to treat important subjects, Vanina gave to this interview, which had been begun with a pistol in hand, the color of a visit made by the young Princess Savelli to her uncle the governor of Rome.

Soon, however, Monsignor Catanzara, rejecting with scorn the idea of suffering himself to be imposed upon by fear, explained to his niece all the difficulties he should have to encounter to save the life of Missirilli; and as he walked up and down the apartment with Vanina, discussing the subject, he filled a crystal goblet from a decanter of lemonade that was placed on the mantel-piece; and as he was going to carry it to his lips, Vanina playfully seized it and then let it fall, as if inadvertently. A moment after, the minister took a pastil of chocolate from his *bonbonniere*. Vanina snatched it from him, saying, laughing: "Take care, every thing about you is poisoned, for your death is sought. I have saved my future uncle's life, that it should not be said I entered the family of Savelli absolutely empty handed."

His Excellency, exceedingly astonished, thanked his niece, and gave her great hopes that the life of Missirilli would be spared. "Our business is finished; as a proof of it here is your recompense," said Vanina, embracing him. The minister accepted the recompense. "I must own to you, my dear Vanina, that I have no gust for blood. Besides I am still young, though, perhaps, you think me very old, and I may live to a period when the blood shed to-day will be considered a blot upon my character." The clock struck two as His Excellency conducted Vanina to the little gate of his garden.

The day when the minister appeared before the Pope, considerably perplexed how to break the application for Missirilli's pardon to him, his Holiness said: "Before we proceed to business, Catanzara, I have a favour to ask of you. There is one of the carbonari of Forli who is under sentence of death. The thought of it keeps me from sleeping. He must be saved." The minister seeing that the Pope had taken his view of the subject, made many objections, and finished by writing a decree, or *mortu proprio*, which the Pope signed contrary to his custom. Vanina thinking, though she might obtain the pardon of

her lover, they would attempt to poison him, conveyed to Missirilli through the Abbe Cari, her confessor, some small parcels of sea-biscuits, with the caution not to touch any of the aliments provided by the state.

Vanina having learned soon after that the carbonari of Forlì were to be transferred to the castle of San-Leo, set out to see Missirilli at Citta-Castellana, where he and the other prisoners would be detained one night on their way to their place of destination. She reached that city twenty-four hours before them, where she found the Abbe Cari, who had preceded her several days. He had obtained from the jailor permission for the young carbonaro to attend mass in the prison chapel at midnight; and he had also consented, provided that Missirilli would allow his arms and legs to be fettered, to retire to the extremity of the chapel, within sight of his prisoner, for whom he was responsible, but not near enough to hear what he said.

The day which was to decide the fate of Vanina at length dawned. In the morning she shut herself up in the chapel of the prison. Who can tell what thoughts agitated her during that long day? Did Missirilli love her enough to pardon her? She had denounced his *vente*, but she had saved his life. When reason assumed the ascendancy in her tortured mind, she indulged the hope that he would consent to quit Italy with her: if she had sinned, it was through excess of love. As the clock struck one, she heard at a distance the dull heavy noise of the hoofs of the carabinieri' horses on the street—each sound seemed to be echoed on her heart. Then she distinguished the rolling of the carts that transported the prisoners. They halted on a little spot before the prison: she saw two carabinieri lift up Missirilli, who was alone on a cart, so loaded with chains that he was incapable of moving himself. "At least," said she to herself, while tears flowed fast from her eyes, "they have not yet poisoned him!" It was a cruel night to her. The lamp of the altar, which was suspended at a great height, and sparingly fed with oil, alone lighted the sombre chapel. The eyes of Vanina wandered among the tombs of some illustrious noblemen of the middle ages who had perished in the cells of the adjacent prison. Their statues bore a ferocious aspect.

All sounds had ceased. Vanina was absorbed in her dismal reflections. Shortly after the bell had proclaimed the midnight hour, she thought she heard a noise as light as the flight of a bat; she attempted to walk, and fell half senseless upon the balustrade of the altar; and, at the same moment, found two phantoms close to her, whose entrance she had not heard. They were the jailor and Missirilli, who was so burdened with chains as to appear encased in iron. The jailor opened a lantern which he placed upon the balustrade, at the side of Vanina, in such a way that he could see his prisoner, and then retired to the most remote part of the chapel near the door.

Scarcely had he withdrawn, before Vanina fell upon Missirilli's neck; but she only felt in

her arms his cold and rugged chains. "Who has given him these chains?" she asked herself; and she experienced no pleasure in embracing her lover. To this grief succeeded another more poignant; for an instant she suspected Missirilli knew her crime, his reception of her was so frozen.

"Dear friend," said he to her, at length, "I regret that you cherish a love for me; it is in vain that I seek to discover what merit in me could have inspired it. Let us return to more christian sentiments; let us forget the illusions which bewildered us. I can never become yours. The constant misfortune that has followed my enterprises is owing perhaps to the sinful state in which I exist. Instead of listening only to the counsels of human prudence, why was I not arrested with my friends on that fatal night at Forlì? Why at the instant of danger was I not at my post? Why did my absence authorize the most cruel suspicions? I encouraged—I had another passion than that of the liberty of Italy."

Vanina did not recover from the surprise which the change in Missirilli had produced. Without being apparently emaciated, he looked thirty years of age. She attributed the change to the harsh treatment he had received in prison, and was melted into tears: "Ah," said she to him, "the jailors promised me faithfully they would treat you with kindness!"

The fact is, that at the approach of death, all the religious principles reconcilable with his passion for the deliverance of Italy, had re-appeared in the heart of the young carbonaro. By degrees Vanina perceived, that the remarkable change she had observed in her lover was entirely moral, and not the effect of hurtful physical treatment. Her grief, which she thought at its height, was now augmented. Missirilli was silent. Vanina was nearly suffocated by her sobs.

He said, apparently a little moved himself: "If I loved any thing upon earth it would be you; but thanks to God, I have now only one object in living. I shall die in prison, or in endeavouring to restore liberty to Italy."

There was another period of embarrassed and uninterrupted silence; it was evident Vanina could not speak; she tried in vain.

Missirilli added: "Give me your word that you will not again endeavour to see me. It is a cruel task; but if there was no difficulty in accomplishing it, where would be the heroism?" As well as his fast-bound chains would permit, he slightly moved his wrist and extended his fingers to Vanina. "If you will allow one, who was dear to you to advise," he continued, "you will act wisely in marrying the meritorious man to whom your father destines you. Do not make him the recipient of dangerous secrets; but, on the other side, never seek to see me again. Let us hereafter be strangers to each other. You advanced a considerable sum of money for the service of our country; if ever she is delivered from her tyrants it shall be faithfully repaid you."

Vanina seemed rooted to the spot, incapable

of calling up her fortitude, or arranging her ideas. In speaking to her Pietro's eye flashed but once, and that was when he named his *country*.

Pride at length came to the succour of the young Princess. Without answering Missirilli she offered him some diamonds and small files, with which she was provided: "I accept them," said he to her, "through duty; because I ought to strive to escape; but here I swear in presence of your new favours, I will never see you again. Never speak of me and forget me. Farewell, Vanina! promise never to write to me—of never endeavouring to see me. Leave me entirely to my country. I am dead to you. Farewell!"

"No," exclaimed Vanina, furiously, "first learn what I have done, prompted by love for you." She then related all her proceedings since the time he absconded from the castle of San-

Nicolo to surrender himself to the legate. When she had finished, she cried: "All this is nothing, I have done more, through love for you!" And she confessed to him her treachery. "Ah! monster!" exclaimed Missirilli, in frenzy, and throwing himself upon her attempted to crush her with his chains, and he would, perhaps, have succeeded if the jailer, alarmed by their cries, had not rushed in and seized the carbonaro. "There, monster, take back your gifts, I wish to owe you nothing," said Missirilli to Vanina; and he threw towards her, as well as his chains permitted, the files and diamonds she had given him, and retreated rapidly. Vanina remained senseless on the ground. She returned to Rome; and it was announced in the *Gazettes* shortly after that she was married to the Prince Don Livio Savelli.